

VZCZCXRO5113  
PP RUEHDBU  
DE RUEHUP #0136/01 0321422  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 011422Z FEB 07  
FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0699  
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE  
RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0080  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BUDAPEST 000136

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO AID AND TO NSC FOR ADAM STERLING

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/28/2012

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [EAID](#) [ECON](#)

SUBJECT: PRT TRAINING ON TIME AND ON TARGET

Classified By: POL/C ERIC. V. GAUDIOSI; REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (SBU) Nearly 50 Hungarian military and law enforcement officers, diplomats, and development experts attended a seminar on PRT operations January 22 - 23. The seminar, consisting of a detailed overview for senior officials in Budapest January 22 and an in-depth, interactive session at a Hungarian military facility in Szolnok January 23, was made possible by the visit of three USAID officials with extensive field experience in Afghanistan.

¶3. (SBU) The seminar was ideally timed, taking place as the GoH begins the rotation of its military contingent (from its PRT-1 to PRT-2) and finalizes its list of development priorities. GoH officials warmly welcomed the opportunity to engage with our substantive experts, taking ownership of the event and lining up appropriately senior interagency participation for the opening session.

¶4. (C) That audience heard a message perfectly calibrated to their situation, as visiting experts emphasized the importance of:

Integrating the Defense, Diplomacy, and Development aspects of the mission;  
Determining priorities in the context of broader IC efforts to avoid duplication;  
Establishing close partnerships with experienced NGOs on the ground;  
Emphasizing impact and sustainability in determining development priorities;  
Empowering officials in the field; and,  
Supporting Afghan authorities by putting a local face on the PRT's efforts.

¶5. (C) Day two of the training developed these themes in greater detail and provided an extensive forum for discussion among participants, many of whom are slated to deploy either in the PRT's second cycle or in subsequent iterations:

MFA attendees focused on the USAID emphasis on having experienced local partners to carry out the development projects, a step which the GoH has not yet taken. It also became clear that the various lines of authority for Hungarian development projects currently meet in Budapest - not in the field. Participants agreed that the PRT command group has to have visibility and some measure of control over these projects on the ground.

The session was a real breakthrough for the enthusiastic Ministry of Agriculture participants, three of whom will deploy shortly, as they received their first substantive

information about the state of veterinary programs in the province.

Military participants discussed at length the fact that their patrolling mission teams are in fact engaged in development and diplomacy as well as their expected role of defense. Many in the session had been in Afghanistan on previous ISAF deployments or with NGOs, and showed a high level of understanding of Afghan cultural norms. This brought out the importance of flexibility in scheduling, and the need to stay out for more than a day in order to reach remote areas of the province (contrary to current Hungarian SOP) and allow meetings to develop in a more natural Afghan setting.

During the afternoon the participants worked through a scenario-driven exercise and back-briefed their conclusions, with vigorous discussion among all participants. The day was capped off with a small team-building dinner during which the commander and deputy commander of PRT-2 discussed with the USAID representative in Pol-I-Khomri their goals for their tour, and the importance of having a cohesive command group that can synchronize the 'three Ds.'

¶6. (C) Press availability complemented the official schedule, spreading the word that Hungary's investment of men and materiel is doing a world of good for the people of Baghlan province. The story continues to resonate in the press a week after the visit, and has supported our efforts to increase public awareness re the mission and thus build popular support for increased defense spending in the longer term.

¶7. (C) The entire mission and our Hungarian colleagues reiterate our thanks to Jennifer Raglans, David Billings, and Monica McQueary for their advice and assistance. It

BUDAPEST 00000136 002 OF 002

reinforced the USG's commitment to working in concert with GoH officials to ensure the success of their efforts in Afghanistan.

Minimize Considered.  
FOLEY